



subspecies of *E. core* and all subspecies of *E. algea* (Ackery and Vane-Wright 1984). Wood (1987), on examining a large series of *Euploea* taken on Murray Island in the Torres Strait, found many specimens which displayed characters intermediate between *E. algea* and *E. core*. He suggested that *E. core corinna* and *E. algea amycus* may be one species, *E. core corinna*. The results of my examination of specimens from this area are presented in this paper.

### Data

A total of 50 specimens of male *E. core* and *E. algea* from throughout the Torres Strait area from several collections including my own, were examined. Thirty of these specimens were considered to be normal *E. algea* males: Murray Island (12), Campbell Island (2), Yam Island (3), Darnley Island (1) and Papua New Guinea (12). The remaining 20 specimens, appeared to be *E. core* based on the retention of some hindwing postmedian band of spots, but many displayed characters that were not typical of *E. core corinna*. These specimens are grouped as follows:

1. those with normal *E. core* spotting on wings and without long spatulate androconia: Thursday Island (3), Prince of Wales Island (1).
2. those with normal *E. core* spotting on wings and with long spatulate androconia: Murray Island (4), Thursday Island (1).
3. those with reduced spotting on wings and without long spatulate androconia: Murray Island (1), Yam Island (2), Cape York (1).
4. those with reduced spotting on wings and with long spatulate androconia: Murray Island (5), Yam Island (2).

The first group can be classified as normal *E. core corinna* based on characters listed while groups (2) to (4) are possible hybrids between *E. core corinna* and *E. algea amycus*. Group (2) would normally be accepted as *E. core* but had androconia present and as such are hybrids. Group (3) most approaches *E. core* but has spot reduction and can be classed as potential hybrids. This group includes the type male of *E. euclus* mentioned in the introduction, and had two specimens with very large sex brands: a feature expected for *E. algea*. Group (4) is closest in appearance to *E. algea* but still retains some postmedian spots on the hindwing and as such are hybrids (figs 1, 2).

### Discussion

Wood (1987) has suggested that *E. core corinna* and *E. algea amycus* are conspecific, using as support the lack of autapomorphies of *E. core* and *E. algea* as outlined by Ackery and Vane-Wright (1984). However, these authors use the term 'clades' (approximately equivalent to species) and admit that in cases such as the clade *core* and the clade *algea* that they refer to species complexes as considered over their Indo-Australian distributions. They also admit in the same

publication that *E. core corinna* probably deserves elevation to species status based on the androconia as outlined in the introduction.

The combined observations of Wood (1987) and myself suggest an alternative explanation for the large number of specimens which display characters intermediate between *E. core* and *E. algea*. The alternative is that hybridization is occurring between *E. core corinna* and *E. algea amycus*. The islands of Torres Strait are small and remote (for example, Murray Island is 45 km from the nearest other island, 120 km from Papua New Guinea, and about 180 km from Cape York). Isolation may place stresses on the populations of *E. core* and *E. algea* in their distributional overlap, increasing the likelihood of hybridization. The androconia are an important feature distinguishing *E. core corinna* and *E. algea amycus* as separate species although they may occasionally hybridize.



Figs 1-2. *Euploea* hybrids with long, spatulate androconia: (1) Yam Island; (2) Murray Island, with postmedian band on hindwing underside.

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